United Nations A/54/PV.95

General Assembly

Fifty-fourth session

Official Records

95th plenary meeting
Friday, 7 April 2000, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Gurirab . . . . . (Namibia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Stanislaus (Grenada), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 125 *(continued)*

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/730/Add.4)

The Acting President: In the letter contained in document A/54/730/Add.4, the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that since the issuance of his communications contained in document A/54/730 and addenda 1 to 3, Equatorial Guinea has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in this document?

It was so decided.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 17 (f), 118, 118 and 164, 119, 120, 121, 124, 125, 127, 151 (a), 164, 169, 173 and 175.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Jan Piotr Jaremczuk of Poland, to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee in one intervention.

Mr. Jaremczuk (Poland), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I deem it a great honour to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee on its work done during the first part of the resumed fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

In connection with sub-item (f), entitled "Appointment of a member of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee", of agenda item 17, entitled "Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/545/Add.1. In paragraph 5 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the appointment of Mr. Victor V. Vislykh of the Russian Federation for a term of office beginning on the date of appointment and ending on 31 December 2000. The Committee recommended the appointment of Mr. Vislykh by acclamation.

Concerning agenda item 118, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/511/Add.2. In paragraph 17 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of three draft resolutions dealing with, respectively, the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, outsourcing practices of the United Nations and the reports of the Office of Internal

00-38279 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Oversight Services. In paragraph 18, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft decisions — entitled "Procurement reform: definition of exigency needs" and "Strengthening of external oversight mechanisms" — and one draft decision proposed by the Chairman of the Committee, entitled "Improving the working methods of the Fifth Committee". The Committee adopted the three draft decisions and the three draft resolutions without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 119, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999", on the question of the Integrated Management Information System, the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/508/Add.2. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 120, entitled "Programme planning", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/676/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft decisions. Draft decision I deals mainly with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. Draft decision II deals with the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Both decisions were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 121, entitled "Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/691/Add.1. In paragraph 9 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 124, entitled "Pattern of conferences", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/690/Add.1. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 125, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/685/Add.1. In paragraph 9 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which, as orally revised and amended, was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

In connection with agenda item 127, entitled "Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/829. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of an oral draft decision deferring consideration of this item to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly. The oral draft decision was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 151 (a), entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", in particular the question of death and disability benefits, the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/684/Add.1. In paragraph 4 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of an oral draft decision proposed by the Chairman of the Committee. The oral draft decision was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 164, entitled "Human resources management", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/680/Add.1. In paragraph 5 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of an oral draft decision deferring consideration of this item to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly. The oral draft decision was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning the question of gratis personnel provided by Governments, under agenda item 118, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", and agenda item 64, "Human resources management", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/827. In paragraph 5 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of an oral draft decision deferring consideration of this question to the second part of its the fifty-fourth session. The draft decision was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Also under these two agenda items, the Committee considered the question of the proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of the Secretary-General and officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission. The report of the Committee on this issue is contained in document

A/54/828. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the deferral of this question to its fifty-fifth session. The oral draft decision was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 169, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission in East Timor", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/505/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 173, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/687/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Finally, regarding agenda item 175, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/830. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The Acting President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified.

Agenda item 17 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(f) Appointment of a member of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/545/Add.1)

The Acting President: In paragraph 5 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint Mr. Victor V. Vislykh of the Russian Federation as a member of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee for a term of office beginning on 7 April 2000 and ending on 31 December 2000.

May I take it that the General Assembly appoints that person?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (f) of agenda item 17.

Agenda item 118 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/511/Add.2)

The Acting President: The Assembly will take a decision on the three draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 17 of its report and on the three draft decisions recommended in paragraph 18 of the same report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit". Draft resolution I was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/255).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Outsourcing practices in the United Nations". The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/256).

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 54/257).

The Acting President: We shall now turn to the three draft decisions recommended in paragraph 18 of the report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/511/Add.2).

Draft decision I is entitled "Procurement reform: definition of exigency needs". Draft decision I was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly likewise wishes to adopt the draft decision?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The Acting President: Draft decision II is entitled "Strengthening of external oversight mechanisms". The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The Acting President: Draft decision III is entitled "Improving the working methods of the Fifth Committee". The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision III. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision III was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 118.

Agenda items 118 (*continued*) **and 164** (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Human resources management

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/827)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/828)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in document A/54/827 and on the draft decision recommended in document A/54/828.

The Assembly will first take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report contained in document A/54/827. The draft decision, entitled "Gratis personnel provided by Governments and other entities", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/54/828. The draft decision, entitled "Proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly also wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 118 and 164.

Agenda item 119 (*continued*)

Programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/508/Add.2)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The draft

decision, entitled "Integrated Management Information System", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 119.

Agenda item 120 (*continued*)

Programme planning

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/676/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

Draft decision I, entitled "Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The Acting President: Draft decision II, entitled "Programme planning", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly likewise wishes to adopt the draft decision?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 120.

Agenda item 121 (*continued*)

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/691/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report and on two draft decisions recommended in paragraph 10 of the same report.

We turn first to the draft resolution entitled "Review of the resource requirements for the High-Level Intergovernmental Event for Financing for Development and the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/258).

The Acting President: We now turn to draft decision I, entitled "Asbestos problem at the United Nations Headquarters building".

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The Acting President: The Fifth committee adopted draft decision II, entitled "Estimates pertaining to matters of which the Security Council is seized", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The Acting President: We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 121.

Agenda item 124 (*continued*)

Pattern of conferences

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/690/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/259).

The Acting President: We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 124.

Agenda item 125 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/685/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/237 D).

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Hays (United States of America): It is my pleasure to address the General Assembly today on what many of us recognize to be a critical issue before the membership, something that, if properly structured, will ensure the future viability of this institution: the assessment scale. Over the past several months, our delegation has had the benefit of thoughtful engagement by many Member States on this issue. These discussions have been fruitful. We are especially encouraged by the resolution of the General Assembly to send new reform proposals to the Committee on Contributions for its consideration. Working together, I believe that we can ensure meaningful, comprehensive and long-awaited change, which will equip this Organization to face the new challenges of the new millennium.

It is clear that we all benefit from this enhanced dialogue and sense of openness. My delegation has sensed a growing recognition that this institution requires a renewed involvement on the part of Member States if the United Nations is to undertake the daunting tasks that we all demand of it. One way in which we can contribute to this effort is to join together in a reform effort that draws us closer to the original ideals of the institution, a reform that is inspired by inclusiveness rather than exclusivity.

The United States delegation believes strongly that this process is taking shape, but it will need a sustained commitment by all of us in order to ensure success. My delegation intends to work with all of our colleagues to promote clarity, engagement and equity in the reform agenda. To that end, we are very pleased with the response to our delegation's speech in the Fifth Committee at its resumed session calling for a review of the peacekeeping scale and a reform of peacekeeping activities in general. The United States delegation will continue its dialogue on this subject and hopes to join with like-minded nations in calling for a full-scale review of the peacekeeping scale and proposals aimed at improving United Nations peacekeeping capabilities.

My delegation hopes that peacekeeping reform will guide the Fifth Committee's agenda in the month of May and that it will receive the same attention, cooperation and thoughtful concern enjoyed in regular budget discussions. As Ambassador Holbrooke recently stated in the Fifth Committee, peacekeeping is the core task for which the United Nations was formed and the one by which it will ultimately be judged. If we are to be judged kindly by future generations, we must resolve the financial and operational problems facing peacekeeping today.

I thank Member States for their continued cooperation and contributions to this end on behalf of my delegation and on behalf of those in every corner of the world that depend on our best efforts.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 125.

Agenda item 127

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/829)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 127.

Agenda item 151 (*continued*)

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

(a) Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/684/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 4 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Death and disability benefits", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 151.

Agenda item 164 (*continued*)

Human resources management

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/680/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 164.

Agenda item 169 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Mission in East Timor

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/505/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/20 B).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 169.

Agenda item 173 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/687/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/246 B).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded our this stage of our consideration of agenda item 173.

Agenda item 175

Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/830)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/260).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 175.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.